

2024 Seasonal Influenza Vaccination Program

Community Pharmacy

Please distribute to all pharmacist immunisers in your pharmacy

1. From March 2024, free influenza vaccines will be available to eligible people under the National Immunisation Program.
2. Pharmacist immunisers should target all Aboriginal people and medically-at risk patients, 5 years and over, pregnant women and people aged 65 years and over.
3. Prepare your pharmacy for the influenza season by reviewing the Influenza Vaccination Provider Toolkit 2024 available at <https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/immunisation/Pages/flu-provider-toolkit.aspx>
4. Pre-allocations of influenza vaccines should be **confirmed online from 9am Monday 4th March 2024**. Deliveries will begin when the influenza vaccine becomes available. Confirmation of pre-allocations **close at 4.30pm Friday 15th March 2024**.

2024 INFLUENZA VACCINATION

- Annual influenza vaccination from mid-April is the single most effective way to protect your patients and others from severe influenza and prevent hospitalisations and deaths.
- Equip yourself to make strong influenza vaccine recommendations, your vaccine recommendations matter. Refer to <https://www.ncirs.org.au/ncirs-fact-sheets-fags-and-other-resources/influenza> for more information.
- Be prepared to discuss the risks and benefits of vaccination. A suite of vaccination communication support tools for health professionals are available at <https://skai.org.au/healthcare-professionals>.

ELIGIBILITY AND PRIORITY GROUPS

- Influenza vaccination is recommended for all people aged 6 months and over (pharmacist immunisers are authorised to administer vaccines to people aged 5 years and over).
- People at higher risk of serious influenza complications are eligible for free influenza vaccination under the National Immunisation Program.
- Prioritise all Aboriginal people and medically-at risk patients aged 5 years and over, pregnant women at any stage of pregnancy and people aged 65 years and over attending your pharmacy.
- Discuss influenza vaccination with other present family members.
- For more information about key at risk groups refer to the *ATAGI 2024 Statement On The Administration of Seasonal Influenza Vaccines* available from early March at <https://www.health.gov.au/committees-and-groups/australian-technical-advisory-group-on-immunisation-atagi>.

CO-ADMINISTRATION WITH COVID-19 AND OTHER VACCINES

- Influenza vaccines can be co-administered with COVID-19 vaccines.
- Take the opportunity to ensure your patients are up to date with their COVID-19 and pneumococcal vaccinations as recommended in the [Australian Immunisation Handbook](#).
- For more information visit, <https://www.health.gov.au/initiatives-and-programs/covid-19-vaccines/advice-for-providers/clinical-guidance>.

PREPARING YOUR PHARMACY

- Read the **NSW Health 2024 Influenza Vaccination Provider Toolkit** available at <https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/immunisation/Pages/flu-provider-toolkit.aspx>.
- Ensure your pharmacy software can report vaccinations to the **Australian Immunisation Register (AIR)**. Reporting of all vaccinations is mandatory. Further information is available at <https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/proda-provider-digital-access>.
- Pharmacist immunisers will need to complete the *Australian Immunisation Register Application to Register as a Vaccination Provider* and *NSW Pharmacist declaration form* to register as a vaccination provider with the Australian Immunisation Register available at <https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/immunisation/Pages/application-air-provider.aspx>.
- Ensure your pharmacy is **registered for online vaccine ordering with the NSW Vaccine Centre** (<https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/immunisation/Pages/guidance-for-pharmacists-NIP-vaccines.aspx>).
- Visit our frequently asked questions and answers about influenza vaccination at <https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/immunisation/Pages/seasonal-flu-vaccination-faqs.aspx>

ORDERING INFLUENZA VACCINE

- Your first order will be pre-allocated to ensure equitable and timely vaccine distribution to all providers in NSW.
- From **Thursday 29th February 2024**, you will receive email instructions from the NSW Vaccine Centre with details on how to accept the pre-allocation, please check your junk folder.
- You will be able to review and **confirm your pre-allocation on Monday 4th March 2024 at 9am** as per the email instructions from NSW Vaccine Centre. **Pre-allocation can be confirmed online at: nsw.tollhealthcare.com**.
- **Pre-allocation confirmation will close at 4.30pm on Friday 15th March 2024**, after this date we will return to routine ordering and delivery. Only confirmed orders will be delivered.
- Due to the timing of initial vaccine supplies into the NSW vaccine centre, pre-allocations will be reduced on previous years. Subsequent orders can be made online once you have received your initial order, however **subsequent orders** will only be delivered once all pre-allocated flu orders have been distributed. Only order enough vaccines for use in a maximum 4 week period.
- There may be limits placed on subsequent orders to manage vaccine supply during the influenza season.
- **Only schedule influenza vaccination clinics once vaccine supplies are received.**

VACCINE DELIVERIES

- Influenza vaccine deliveries will commence when the vaccines become available, and orders will ONLY be despatched to pharmacies who have reviewed and confirmed their first order pre-allocation.
- Due to the volume of orders at the beginning of the season, it takes around four weeks for the NSW Vaccine Centre to deliver all first influenza vaccine orders.

FURTHER INFORMATION

- NSW Health Influenza Immunisation website <https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/immunisation/Pages/flu.aspx>.
- NSW Health Influenza website www.health.nsw.gov.au/flu .
- Contact your local Public Health Unit on **1300 066 055**.